

Washington, DC— Forty four years after the Sisters of Saint Francis of Philadelphia opened Our Lady of Angles College in Aston, PA, Congressman Joe Sestak (PA-07) congratulated the Neumann community on acquiring university standing. (Full text of the Congressman's statement that appears in the Congressional Record is below. You can watch Congressman Sestak deliver his comments at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LqV3K9W5Wsc>) Speaking on the floor of the House of Representatives, the Congressman extolled the exceptional leaders who have worked tirelessly to enhance the institution's programs since it began with 115 female students in 1965.

"For a college to qualify as a university in Pennsylvania requires extraordinary vision and perseverance on the part of its leaders and Neumann University is blessed to have President Rosalie Mirenda and Sr. Marguerite O'Beirne, OSF, Vice President for Mission & Ministry, to continue the work of their predecessors," said the Congressman in his remarks. "Achieving university status marks the culmination of a remarkable transformation for Neumann. It is a living testament to the decency, hard work and absolute commitment of the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia."

State regulations provide that, to become a university, a school must show it has a college of arts and sciences, a minimum of five graduate programs, one doctoral program and cultural programming open to the community.

Full Text of Congressman Sestak's Remarks Read into the Congressional Record

Madam Speaker,

I rise to honor a remarkable institution of higher education focused on developing graduates who understand that true reward comes not only by acquiring knowledge, but also through the use of that knowledge in the service of others.

In the fall of 1965, the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia opened Our Lady of Angels College,

based in both liberal arts and Franciscan traditions, with just 115 female students in Aston, Pennsylvania. In 1980, male students were admitted for the first time and the Board of Trustees approved changing its name to Neumann as a tribute to the significant role former Bishop, and now Saint John Neumann played in the order's early formation.

Forty-four years later, through the tireless efforts of the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia and their many supporters, the 7th Congressional District of Pennsylvania is home to a new university. On April 30th, the Pennsylvania Department of Education recognized more than two years of research, planning, applications, and campus evaluations by issuing a certificate of authority to elevate Neumann College to university status.

For a college to qualify as a university in Pennsylvania requires extraordinary vision and perseverance on the part of its leaders and Neumann University is blessed to have President Rosalie Mirenda and Sr. Marguerite O'Beirne, OSF, Vice President for Mission & Ministry, to continue the work of their predecessors. They and the entire Neumann staff worked to develop the requisite undergraduate studies in the arts and sciences, a minimum of five professional graduate programs, a doctoral program, and cultural programming open to the community.

In addition to schools of business and nursing, Neumann offers a college of arts and sciences as well as six graduate and two doctoral programs. What sets Neumann apart from others colleges and universities is its unparalleled ability to educate its students beyond the classroom of through programs that sharpen social awareness and ethical concern. As Dr. Mirenda so eloquently describes her university, "We will give you the opportunity to experience the reality that learning and living are one; that education is truly the combination of the intellect, the body, the heart, and the soul, and that education is about relationships -- going deeper into your being to discover the special gift of yourself and all creation that surrounds you".

Also, as part of its mission, Neumann University has a very strong minority recruitment program; works aggressively to see that a values-based private education is affordable to as many young men and women as possible; and imbues each student with the notion that learning is a lifelong process. Achieving university status marks the culmination of a remarkable transformation for Neumann. It is a living testament to the decency, hard work and absolute commitment of the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia.

Madame Speaker, today I acknowledge the 8,327 living alumni, 3,037 current students, 507

faculty and staff, Board of Trustees, and President Rosalie Mirenda on achieving their goal of advancing Neumann University as a recognized Catholic Franciscan higher education institution focused on its mission and dedicating themselves to make ours a better community, nation and world.

Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever elected to the U.S. Congress.

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